

What's Up?

JCCDC Newsletter for Parents, Providers, Community Partners & Staff



A Note from the Director

Tena Sales

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Being mentally healthy during childhood means reaching developmental and emotional milestones and learning healthy social skills and how to cope when there are problems. Mentally healthy children have a positive quality of life and can function well at home, in school, and in their communities.

As parents, it's important to ensure that our children feel supported through each stage of development. While professional intervention can be warranted in situations where children are having great difficulty coping with life, there are many ways that parents can support a child's mental health including modeling healthy coping skills, keeping communication open and honest and watching for changes in your child's behavior.

1. Model healthy coping skills.
2. Watch for behavior changes.
3. Keep communication open and honest.
4. Create a routine and set clear boundaries at home.
5. Let them know they are loved and supported.
6. Talk about emotions and feelings regularly.

**Small steps
can lead to
big progress
in mental health.**

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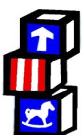
- 5/4 National Fire Fighter's Day
- 5/7 Teacher Appreciation Day
- 5/12 Mother's Day
- 5/24 Brother's Day
- 5/26 National Family Fun Day



- 6/1 National Dare Day
- 6/8 National Best Friend Day
- 6/16 Father's Day
- 6/19 Juneteenth
- 6/27 National Handshake Day



- 6/5 **Rolanda Woods, Provider**
- 6/6 **Stella Baskin, Nutrition Coordinator**
- 6/13 **Virginia Washington, Provider**
- 6/14 **Carol King & Shirley Melton, Providers**
- 6/27 **Stephen McGhee, Accountant**





Here are some tips to help you prepare your child for Kindergarten:

✓ Help your child to develop independence at home. Encourage

your child to dress themselves, take their coat on and off and hang it up, use the bathroom without assistance and wash their hands without constant reminders, and put on their own shoes. Provide serving spoons so your child can serve himself at the table and clear his own dishes. These skills will take him from the coatroom to the lunchroom and beyond.

- ✓ **Focus on self-help skills.** Your child should know how to wipe his/her face after lunch without prompting and blow their nose without assistance. But be sure he/she is also comfortable asking an adult for help when necessary.
- ✓ **Teach responsibility.** Start transferring small responsibilities over to your child, if you haven't already. After a family trip to the pool, you might put your child in charge of emptying the backpack, refilling the water bottles, or hanging up their wet swimsuit. Even when it may be easier for you to complete these tasks, let him accept the responsibility.
- ✓ **Develop and follow routines.** Set up morning routines that will transfer into a school setting. Getting up around the same time every day, getting dressed, and having an early breakfast together is a great way to transition to school.
- ✓ **Read aloud to your child.** Get your child a library card, take her to the library to check out books, and be sure to read to your child every day. Read a variety of books, read the captions under pictures in the newspaper, even share comics. Just read!
- ✓ **Acknowledge feelings.** Avoid talking about school too much or wait until the end of summer is near. Your child may express being nervous, not wanting to go or, alternately, feeling very excited to start school. Whatever they feel, take time to appreciate where they are.

Rather than worry about whether your child is ready to read and write, think about his/her skills as a whole. What can they do well that will help them succeed? The quiet child who has reading abilities will find their way to the social butterfly that needs help writing their name. The silly, wiggly child will find a spot as the classroom helper. Rest assured, they will all navigate kindergarten together.

how to make Ice Cream in a bag



Ingredients

- 1 cup of half-and-half
- 2 tablespoons of granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon of pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups of ice
- 1/3 cup of kosher salt
- Toppings of your choice

Step 1

Mix the half-and-half, sugar, and vanilla in a resealable bag. Push as much air as you can out of the bag before you seal it.

Step 2

Place the ice and the kosher salt in another resealable bag.

Step 3

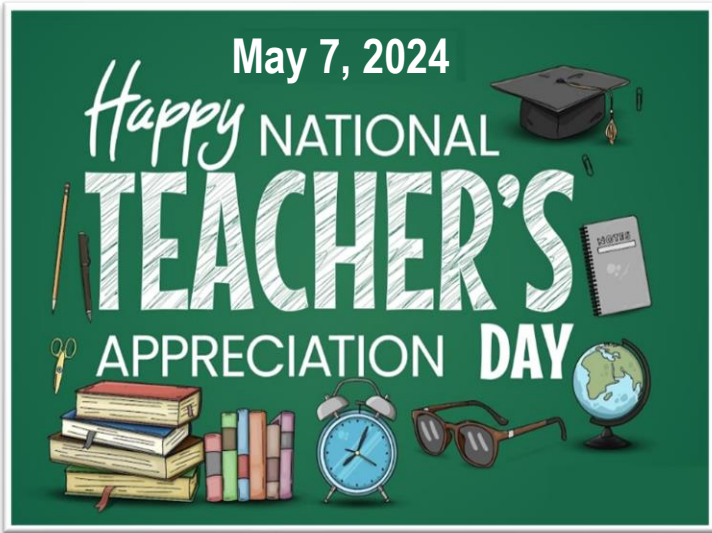
Place the sealed half-and-half mixture into the bag with the ice. Now seal up that outer bag.

Step 4

Vigorously shake the bags for 5 to 10 minutes. When finished, the half-and-half mixture will harden to form ice cream.

Step 5

Add toppings and enjoy.



Political and educational leaders began discussions for a day to honor teachers in 1944. In 1953, Eleanor Roosevelt persuaded the 81st Congress to proclaim National Teachers' Day. Congress declared March 7, 1980, as National Teacher Day. The National Education Association continued to observe National Teacher Day on the first Tuesday in March until 1985. The National PTA established Teacher Appreciation Week as the first full week of May when the NEA Representative Assembly voted to make the Tuesday of that week National Teacher Day.

National Teacher Appreciation Day is also known as National Teacher Day. The National Education Association describes National Teacher Day "as a day for honoring teachers and recognizing the lasting contributions they make to our lives."

Teachers play a critical role in educating and shaping our children into the future leaders of our country. These kind, patient, hard-working, dedicated, and understanding professionals help mold our children and guide them in positive directions. We entrust our children with teachers during the school year and they play a pivotal role in their lives daily.



No matter where we are in life, a teacher influenced us. They continue to impact our lives every day, too! When we meet new employees with a wealth of skills and abilities, know a teacher helped shaped them. Every new business owner, doctor, engineer, or nurse can name a teacher who inspired them. Every one of us has at least one teacher in mind who encouraged and motivated us during our education.

Take the time today to say "Thank You" to the exceptional teachers you know. Take a moment and reflect on the teachers in your life.



SUMMER LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO MAKE IT FUN

submitted by Phillip Merriweather, Family Engagement Manager

Sun-filled days at the pool, adventurous family vacations, no alarm clocks and extended bedtimes. These are just a few visions that many students have as they long for the carefree days of summer. As parents plan family vacations and activities to keep their children busy, it's important to remember that learning can and should still continue in the summer months.

And parents, you are in luck! We have some very simple summer learning activities that are so much fun your children won't even realize they are being asked to continue to learn on their summer vacation!

Visit Your Local Zoo.



Summer is the perfect time to make a fun list of attractions to see. Many children love visiting animals at the zoo. Deepen your child's knowledge of the animals by having them read the different exhibits. If giraffes are your children's favorite animal, spend more time at this exhibit, ask them additional questions and encourage them to continue researching giraffes once they return home. Young children may enjoy drawing a picture with all of the information they learned and older children may want to check-out a book from the local library.

Have a Scavenger Hunt at the Museum.

Visits to the museum are a perfect educational activity for the dog days of summer. Make the visit not only educational, but also fun by turning it into a scavenger hunt. If you're going to an art museum, your list can include things you might see in paintings or sculptures. If it's a natural history museum, you can include dinosaurs and animals.

Weekly Game Night.

Pick a night of the week and host a family friendly weekly game night. For younger kids, you can play a card game like Go Fish, which works with numbers, attention and concentration, and memorization skills. For older kids, Scrabble is a great game for language skills and Monopoly is great for counting currency and thinking strategically.



Visit the Library.

The most important way to build and sustain reading proficiency is for kids to read daily. Reading each day goes a long way towards developing valuable vocabulary and comprehension skills. Most libraries have summer reading programs for children.

Turn Daily Routines into Practical Learning Opportunities.

Children are naturally motivated to learn about topics that interest them. If your children like to be in the kitchen, ask them to join you for some cooking fun. Have them be in charge of measurements when mixing ingredients. This could be a good time to discuss fractions and conversions. If your children like sports, think about how you can deepen their math understanding while watching their favorite game. What's the score of the game? Can you calculate batting averages?

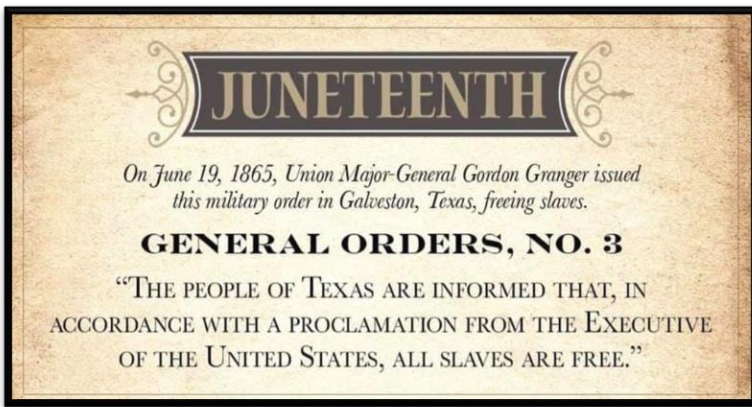
Let them be your Travel Agents.

Many families use the summer months to take a family vacation. Before you set off on your adventure, let your children get involved in the planning process. Have them research the area you are visiting and see if there's any nearby attractions they would like to visit. Many cities have walking or biking historical tours you can participate in. The entire process serves as a finance, geography, history and social studies lesson all wrapped in one.



Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, is celebrated annually on June 19 to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States.

The **Emancipation Proclamation**, issued by President Abraham Lincoln on Jan. 1, 1863, declared freedom for enslaved people in Confederate states. However, it took over two years for the news to reach enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas.



On June 19, 1865, Union Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston and announced the end of slavery, effectively emancipating the remaining enslaved individuals in Texas. This momentous event became known as Juneteenth, a combination of "June" and "nineteenth."

Juneteenth has become an occasion to honor ancestors, recognize their sacrifices, and celebrate the achievements and contributions of Black Americans to the nation. The holiday is marked by

various activities such as parades, picnics, musical performances, historical reenactments and educational events, fostering a sense of community, unity and pride.

It offers an opportunity to educate and raise awareness about the history of slavery, the struggles endured by African Americans, and the ongoing fight against systemic racism. Juneteenth empowers individuals to engage in conversations, advocate for equality, and work towards creating a more just society.

Over the years, Juneteenth has gained increasing recognition and support at both the local and national levels. Numerous states have officially recognized Juneteenth as a state holiday or observance, dedicating resources to public events and educational initiatives.

In 2021, Juneteenth was **officially declared** a federal holiday in the United States, further solidifying its significance and the importance of acknowledging the legacy of slavery. Juneteenth is an occasion to honor the past, address present challenges and strive for a more inclusive and equitable future. It stands as a momentous celebration of freedom, resilience and the indomitable spirit of the African American community.



As we commemorate Juneteenth, let us embrace the opportunity to learn and empathize by recognizing the significance of this historical event and engaging in meaningful conversations.

Family Support and Well-being

Submitted by: Earlene Reynolds



Family well-being occurs when all family members are safe, healthy, and have chances for educational advancement and economic mobility. Support services such as early care and education, housing and food assistance, and physical and mental health care positively contribute to the well-being of families and their children. When families face challenges that cause stress, including poverty and homelessness, their health and wellness can be negatively impacted. Engaging families as active participants in problem-solving and goal-setting can help them identify and use their own strengths to address the challenges they face.

When families are healthy, safe, and economically stable, their children's health and well-being can thrive. Explore this collection of resources from the Building Foundations for Economic Mobility (BFEM) Initiative. Find the latest information about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a tax benefit for low-income individuals and families.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-support-well-being/article/building-foundations-economic-mobility-bfem>

Playgrounds & Child Safety

Submitted by Latuasha Holifield, Health & Safety Specialist



Play is an important part of a child's development. Playing outside in the fresh air can be fun and adventurous, particularly when there are playmates. With careful planning, play environments can be both challenging and safe for children. The backyard or local playground provides lots of scope to run, climb, swing, explore and play imaginary games.

Children using playground equipment can experience many health, social and cognitive benefits.

Although children sometimes fall from playground equipment, you can reduce the risk of injury by keeping an eye on your children, encouraging the use of age-appropriate equipment and allowing them to explore creative but safe ways to move. Make sure there is a suitable surface beneath and around all play equipment, that has been tested in accordance with ASTM Playground Standards.

Playground Benefits for Children

Being outdoors encourages all types of free play and helps children understand their environment. Playgrounds provide children with a range of experiences and opportunities including:

- Being physically active
- Being challenged and taking risks
- Socializing with friends
- Learning to cooperate
- Using their imagination
- Playing independently

A well-designed playground will stimulate a child's imagination and encourage them to explore new dimensions to play.

